

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP  
PLANNING AND DESIGN COMMITTEE  
Mansfield Town Hall  
Conference Room B**

**Tuesday, March 17, 2015**

**MINUTES**

Members: Chair Steve Bacon, Paul Aho, Sondra Astor-Stave, Karla Fox, Manny Haidous, Jon Hand, Chris Kueffner, Peter Millman, Betsy Paterson, and Karin Randolph

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm

Guests: Debbie Lastro, Howard Kaufman, and Lou Marquet from LeylandAlliance

**1. Call to Order**

Steve Bacon called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm.

**2. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**3. Approval of Minutes from December 16, 2014 and February 17, 2015**

Mr. Bacon asked that the December 16, 2014 minutes be changed to reflect that radon testing was done at the former UConn Publications building with some high radon results. The building was demolished as part of the Storrs Center project. Radon testing was then subsequently done in the 1 and 9 Dog Lane, and 1 Royce Circle buildings. Those test results were below any recommended level for action.

Karin Randolph made a motion to approve the December 16, 2014 minutes. Paul Aho seconded the motion. The motion was approved with one abstention by Betsy Paterson.

Ms. Paterson made a motion to approve the February 17, 2015 minutes. Karla Fox seconded the motion. The motion was approved with abstentions from Mr. Aho, Sondra Astor-Stave, Manny Haidous, Jon Hand, Peter Millman, and Karin Randolph.

Mr. Bacon indicated that he and Mr. Millman would be recusing themselves from the rest of the meeting.

Mr. Bacon reminded the Committee and guests that there had been discussion about how to address a courtyard area in between VS8/9 and VS-10 during the Committee's review of the Phase 2 plans last year.

Mr. Marquet had relayed to Mr. Bacon and Cynthia van Zelm that it would be best to view that area once the buildings were up. Mr. Marquet will be in touch with Mr. Bacon and Ms. van Zelm in early April to see if the Committee could meet there at 5 pm in April.

Mr. Bacon and Mr. Millman left the meeting.

Ms. Fox chaired the rest of the meeting.

#### **4. Review of Preliminary Zoning Permit Application for Main Street Homes (Phase 3)**

Mr. Marquet had provided the site model of Main Street Homes for Committee members to view.

He reviewed the overall site plan.

Mr. Marquet said that half the units were sold.

Mr. Marquet noted that the loop road around Main Street Homes is private. Ms. van Zelm asked about the road behind Phase 2. Mr. Kaufman said that road is part of Phase 2 and will be a public road. It will need to be dedicated by the Town as a public road.

Ms. Paterson asked about access for fire and emergency vehicles. Debbie Lastro said the alleys between the townhomes are accessible. Mr. Marquet said a pad was placed behind the Building 4 townhomes at the request of the Town Fire Marshal.

Mr. Marquet showed the design for the Community Building. He said homeowners can rent the space and host other groups as well.

Mr. Kaufman said there will be a property manager for the homes who will also help people sign up to use the Community Building.

Mr. Marquet said there are 21 parking spaces on the street.

There will be trash receptacles inside the indoor motor court of the condo building and they will be placed outside on trash day.

Mr. Marquet said the “hammerhead” turnaround at the end of the road near Building 8 was requested by the Fire Marshal. He said the wall at the end of the hammerhead will be 10 feet tall and will be similar to the wall adjacent to Price Chopper on Wilbur Cross Way (cast concrete with a textured face).

Ms. van Zelm relayed a comment from Committee member Greg Padick who could not be at the meeting. Mr. Padick had asked about access to the Town conservation area and Whetten Woods from the Community Building. He thought safe access was important and that a trailhead may be an option from the Community Building. The Committee and Leyland team discussed this idea and suggested that a physical link to the open space area be provided but not necessarily a formal trailhead as that may imply available parking.

Mr. Marquet said the team had shifted the number of units from 38 total to 42 total with the addition of more of the smaller townhomes which are the most popular units, eliminating one of the larger townhome buildings. Thirteen of the sixteen smaller townhomes have sold (from the former plan).

Ms. Randolph asked if the courtyards in the larger townhomes are enclosed and Ms. Lastro replied in the affirmative. Mr. Marquet said there should be good drainage to address snow.

Chris Kueffner noted that many of the buildings are facing north and that the garages in the larger townhomes will be visible from the street. Mr. Hand echoed a concern about the front of the buildings facing away from the sun. Mr. Marquet and Mr. Kaufman said this was a challenge with the site but they decided that it was more appealing for the front of the buildings to face the conservation area (Buildings 7 and 8).

Mr. Marquet said the post office boxes will be in the Community Building with a bulletin board listing events. There will be a kitchen as well. Restrooms will be handicapped accessible. Mr. Hand said it would be great if the cupola on the building could bring in light.

Ms. Fox asked how many people could fit in the Community Building. Mr. Marquet thought that 30 could fit comfortably and Ms. Lastro thought 80 could fit in rows.

Mr. Marquet said there will be a front and side porch off the Community Building. Mr. Kueffner, Mr. Aho, and Mr. Hand asked about a patio off the back of the Community Building. Mr. Marquet said the area is close to the vernal pool area. It would be difficult to move the building closer to the street as the front of the building is already very close to the street. Mr. Marquet said they can look into the possibility of a back porch once the building is up.

Mr. Kueffner asked how the buildings will be heated. Mr. Marquet said the buildings will be heated the same way as the previous buildings – with gas. There are no gas fireplaces in the smaller townhomes but the other units have gas fireplaces.

Mr. Marquet said that owners can park on the street or the parking garage if they have more than one car (the condos and smaller townhomes have one parking space designated for each unit). They would need to pay for these spaces.

Mr. Haidous asked if units could be customized. Ms. Lastro said the units cannot be customized but an inside wall could be taken out if desired. Owners can ask for upgrades, i.e., of cabinets.

With respect to the larger townhomes, Mr. Marquet said there will be porches in the front and garages in the rear. These units have two garages. A resident would step out of the kitchen to the patio. With respect to the exterior units, the master bedroom is on the first floor. The interiors units have the master bedroom on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Mr. Marquet said the courtyard can be hardscape or grass.

Mr. Hand left the meeting.

With respect to the condo building, Ms. Lastro said that every unit has a storage unit. The building is very similar to what Leyland has built in Warwick Grove. Residents can also put bikes, chairs, etc. in front of their cars in the indoor motor court.

Mr. Marquet said this is a secure building and people would need to be “buzzed” in.

Mr. Marquet said the goal is to start site work in May and deliver all the buildings in 18 to 20 months. People will be able to move in as buildings are completed.

Ms. Astor-Stave asked about the lengthy distance from the guest bedroom to the guest bathroom. Mr. Marquet acknowledged this challenge and said it was difficult to not do the layout in that manner.

Mr. Haidous asked if the units can be rented. Mr. Kaufman replied in the affirmative but said there will be some rules in the homeowners' documents.

Ms. van Zelm said the Partnership public hearing on the zoning permit application will be April 14 at 7 pm in the Council Chambers. Mr. Kaufman said he will be inviting the buyers to the hearing.

## **5. Storrs Center Update**

Ms. Fox asked for an update on the other buildings.

Mr. Marquet said the weather has proven to be a challenge for work on the Phase 2 buildings. The target for completion is now August 1. The goal is to start façade work soon.

Mr. Kaufman said that Bliss, a consignment clothing store, has signed a lease for Phase 2. They have a current store in Willimantic that they will continue to operate. He said that Gansett Wraps has also signed a lease in the VS-2 building. They originate out of Rhode Island. There are on-going discussions with other tenants.

Mr. Kaufman said the latest report he has received is that Educational Playcare will open in the fall.

Mr. Kaufman said Hair Cuttery and Wing Stop will be moving into the building adjacent to Price Chopper. He said that Hart Realty Advisers, on behalf of the State of Connecticut Retirement Plans and Trust Fund, owns that building now, and it is leased and managed by The Wilder Companies.

## **6. Review of Preliminary Zoning Permit Application for Main Street Homes (Phase 3) continued**

Ms. Fox made a motion to move the Preliminary Zoning Permit Application for Main Street Homes to the next stage of review at the Partnership's public hearing based on the Committee's review and recommendation of the plans. Ms. Paterson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

## **7. Adjourn**

Mr. Aho made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Paterson seconded the motion. The motion was approved and the meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.

*Minutes prepared by Cynthia van Zelm*